

The New Amberola GRAPHIC



Plus other features...

Joseph C. Smith

Yvonne de Treville

National Music Lovers

35¢

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Editor's Notes

Surprise! The articles in this issue were printed entirely by offset. Not only that, they were reduced considerably which gives you much more reading matter than by our customary mimeo process. Unfortunately the printing costs will not allow us to do this often; if we did, the GRAPHIC would soon go under! Future issues will perhaps contain a mixture of mimeo and offset articles. If our postage bill weren't so astronomical we could give you a lot more for your money. Consider for a moment that we turn over \$1.60 of every \$2.75 subscription to the postal service, and you begin to understand what we're up against.

Some good news. We've just received volumes 4 and 5 of Wendell Moore's reprint of The Edison Phonograph Monthly (see review of E.P.M. in GRAPHIC no. 24). Wendell assures his customers that the entire 14 volume set will eventually be published, and he states that volumes 6 and 7 will be ready in the spring. Don't fail to begin your set if you have any interest at all in the Edison company. For further details, write him at his new address: RR #1, Box 474H, Sedona, Arizona 86336.

I was recently notified that the Payer Cylindrical Phonograph Record Co. is defunct and a refund check was enclosed. If any readers who ordered have not yet received a refund (did anyone get any records?), I suggest you contact Michael Payer personally at P.O. Box R, Willimantic, Conn. 06226.

Best wishes for a great spring. Hope you like this issue! -M.F.B.

* * *
We will be announcing some interesting new items in the next issue of the GRAPHIC.

EVER WONDER ABOUT LITTLE WONDER?

A HISTORY OF LITTLE WONDER

by Tim Brooks

One of the most interesting recording ventures of the mid 'teens was the Little Wonder record. These little discs created an uproar in the talking machine industry of the day, because of their extremely low price of 10¢ and their enormous sales. Millions of them were sold.

Despite the interest of collectors today in these odd little records, little has been written about them. Parts of the story are still unclear (and further information is earnestly solicited), but the following will relate what is currently known about Little Wonder.

The Record Industry in 1914

The recording industry in 1914 was a virtual monopoly of Victor, Columbia and Edison. By virtue of the patents they controlled, Victor and Columbia had managed to drive just about all the competition out of the biggest segment of the industry, the lateral-cut record field, and had maintained prices at an artificially high level. Seventy-five cents was an exorbitant amount of money to charge for an ordinary single record¹, considering the small cost of manufacture and the fact that artists were paid very little. Classical records, 12-inch discs and other special records cost even more. Ordinary floor model Victrolas and Grafonolas were priced from \$75 to \$200 and up, a small fortune in 1914 wages. Victor and Columbia were making a great deal of money.

Many persons in the talking machine industry could see the enormous sales potential for a low priced record, but the problem was how to get around the Victor and Columbia patents. Leeds and Catlin had tried in the pre-1910 period, with its string of "custom" labels (Leeds, Imperial, etc.) and so had the Auburn Button Works' International Record Co. (Talk-o-Phone, International, etc.) and the European Odeon Co. (American).² All had been driven out of business by lawsuits or the threat of them. Since 1910 Victor and Columbia had had little, if any, lateral competition.³

Columbia, which was the more flexible of the two giants, was willing to press records for others, on their own labels, but always in such a way that the records could not compete directly with Columbia's own. The "Chicago group"--Standard, Harmony, United, Aretino, Consolidated--all had outsized spindle holes, and were inconvenient to play on ordinary machines. Oxford (made for Sears) and Lakeside (Montgomery Ward) were single-sided only. And these were not really cheap; single-sided Oxfords sold for 30¢.

Thus when a music publisher named Henry Waterson appeared on the scene in 1914 with a 5½ inch lateral cut record that sold for only 10¢, the effect was revolutionary.

Waterson was well connected in the music business, having made his name, and no doubt his fortune, as Irving Berlin's partner in publishing (Waterson was president of Waterson, Berlin and Snyder). He also dabbled in other money-making schemes. A 1915 article stated that he was coming out with a 10¢ player piano roll,⁴

and in 1916 it was reported that "he has a number of retail music stores and also operates a large factory where oil paintings are reproduced to sell for \$1.00 retail."⁵ Henry was quite an operator, and he specialized in high volume, low priced merchandise.

His Little Wonder record was introduced to the trade in the October 1914 issues of several trade publications.⁶ Waterson retailed the little discs for \$70 per thousand to all retailers, but his main distribution was through 5&10 cent chains such as Woolworth's, Kresge's, McCrory's, Charles Williams', and the like. Most importantly, he was able to land a contract with Sears, Roebuck, the giant mail order house, which featured Little Wonder in all its catalogs beginning in the spring of 1915.

Waterson was the sole owner of Little Wonder. Trade reports made that clear,⁷ and the ads he took out in Talking Machine World advised dealers to order directly from him, at the Waterson, Berlin and Snyder offices at 1571 Broadway, New York City. He also applied for and was granted the Little Wonder trademark in his own name, stating that it "has been continuously used in my business since September 1st, 1914."⁸ This could reflect the date on which Little Wonders were first sold.

Nevertheless one of the major record companies had to be behind Waterson or he would have run afoul of the same patent infringement suits that had sunk so many of his predecessors. That company was Columbia, which recorded the masters and pressed the records for Waterson. Columbia never publicly acknowledged its connection with Little Wonder. In early 1915 Talking Machine World asked the major companies to comment on the situation, whereupon Victor emphatically denied that it was the source of the 10¢ records; Edison couldn't have been behind them, since it made only vertical cut records. Significantly, Columbia said nothing.⁹

However the connection was obvious. Little Wonder needed patent protection, and the six patents embossed on the back of every Little Wonder record all belonged to Columbia (they are in fact the same six patents cited on every Columbia record from the period). Waterson's ads gave his 1571 Broadway address as headquarters, but the records were shipped F.O.B. Bridgeport, Connecticut--the site of Columbia's plant. And finally, though Little Wonder was not listed in the New York City directory for several years, when it finally was, in 1921, the entry read "Little Wonder Record Co., Columbia Graphophone Co., representatives."¹⁰

The Little Wonder recording program was evidently kept separate from that of Columbia. There is no information on Little Wonder in the Columbia files. Pioneer bandleader Wilbur Sweatman recalled in an interview years ago that he had recorded separately for Little Wonder, doing shorter versions of the tunes he did for Columbia (Sweatman is on Little Wonder 1041, 1091, 1169, 1192 and 1223 or 1233).¹¹ The Sweatman recordings are all listed by Brian Rust in Jazz Records, who assumes that they were cut at the same sessions in which Sweatman cut the same titles for Columbia itself.

Little Wonders were short--about 1½ minutes each--

but they contained all the latest popular hits, and they sold like hotcakes. The Sears catalog noted that "18,000 Little Wonder records were sold by one store in Boston the first day they were offered for sale."¹² Talking Machine World said, "The Little Wonder record has exceeded all expectations of the most sanguine concerning them. The Waterson concern is said to be 2,000,000 behind in orders for them, after disposing of 4,500,000 during January (1915)...The 'Waterson Record,' as the 10¢ disc is known, is put down as the sensational success of the musical trade history."¹³ By mid 1916 it was reported that twenty million of them had been sold!¹⁴ No wonder the earlier numbers are not hard to find.

The land office business that some stores did in Little Wonders is aptly reflected in a March 1915 report from Chicago.¹⁵ It first corrected a previous story by saying that Waterson, Berlin & Snyder's own Busy Corner Music Store in that city would not be handling them, because it couldn't get enough of them!

"Across the street, however, at the Woolworth 10¢ store, the public can buy these records in abundance. The signs in the window announce that a 'big shipment of Little Wonder records has just been received.' There follows a list of some 33 popular selections. Upstairs a girl is handing out the records as fast as she can to a crowd two deep, shuffling the records about like playing cards, occasionally stopping to put a new record on the small machine that is constantly playing, but never bothering to change the needle."

The phenomenal success of Little Wonder in 1915 caused concern in many circles that it would undercut the sales of regular 75¢ discs. Dealers in Baltimore were said to be alarmed,¹⁶ and The Talking Machine Men, a New York City trade association, met to discuss what might be done to combat the 10¢ record.¹⁷ A group of music publishers was reported to be planning to bring out a 10¢ record of its own, and even obtained price quotes from "one of the prominent talking machine companies" for their manufacture.¹⁸ But nothing came of any of this, because everybody's business was booming anyway. Waterson expanded his line, selling a cheap \$10 record player called the Little Wonder, and also offering accessories such as a little album to hold the discs.¹⁹

Success usually seems to attract trouble, and Little Wonder found itself hit with a lawsuit in 1916. It provides us with some interesting information on a behind-the-scenes connection with Emerson.²⁰

EMERSON ASKS \$100,000 WATERSON ACCOUNTING

Summons and complaint in an accounting action seeking \$100,000 under an alleged agreement splitting the profits of the sale of "Little Wonder" records has been filed in the County Clerk's office in New York by Victor H. Emerson of the Emerson Phonograph Co., against Henry Waterson, manufacturer of the "Little Wonder" 10 cent record.

The complaint sets forth that 20,000,000 "Little Wonder" records have been sold by the defendant and that agreement has been entered into by him with the plaintiff, whereby the latter was to receive one-half, or one-half cent, of the originators royalties accruing from each sale. Mr. Emerson asks for \$100,000, or one-half the sum accruing from the sale of 20,000,000 records. His complaints aver that as "the father of the ten-cent record" he delegated the "Little Wonder" privileges of the American (Graphophone) Co. to Mr. Waterson, and subsequently assigned his agreement to the Emerson Phonograph Co. The case has not yet been docketed for trial.

Initially the courts agreed with Emerson and awarded him a \$46,000 judgement against Waterson.²¹ However this verdict was overturned on appeal in 1918. Reporting the outcome of the appeal,²² Talking Machine World explained that in 1914, Victor Emerson--who was then an official of the Columbia Co.--had given Waterson "exclusive distributing rights for the small Little Wonder records made by the American Graphophone Co." In return, Waterson agreed to split his profits 50/50 with Emerson, and in fact he had paid Emerson a total of \$17,000. However,

Waterson claimed that he had to pay the American Graphophone Co. so much royalty that he did not make the profit he expected out of Little Wonder, and he sued Emerson for the money advanced. Emerson, on the other hand, alleged that Waterson had made a profit of \$200,000 out of Little Wonder records and wanted the court to give him a judgement of half that amount...

The opinion handed down states that the testimony as to the alleged verbal contract between Emerson and Waterson is not conclusive, but even if such a contract did exist, it would be null and void in law, because Emerson was at the time it was made a trusted employee of the American Graphophone Co., and was receiving pay to work in their interests, therefore he had no right to make such a contract.

This all sounds like behind-the-scenes hanky panky. Waterson obviously had to pay Columbia quite a lot for the use of their patents, but why did he also have to pay off Victor Emerson, a Columbia employee? Perhaps the 10¢ record was Emerson's idea in the first place. Also, possibly, Emerson's attempt to use his position at Columbia for personal profit may have figured in his departure from the company in 1915 (after which he founded Emerson records).

Another Little Wonder-Emerson connection has also turned up. Most of the early "small" Emerson records were 5-7/8", slightly larger than the Little Wonders, but Martin Bryan has one that is 5 1/2" and which has a capital "D" enclosed in a diamond embossed on the blank side. The same symbol is found on some Little Wonders (as is, often, an enclosed "S" or "A"). This might indicate that they were pressed by the same factory.

Despite its legal troubles, Little Wonder continued as an independent label, issuing new titles at the rate of more than a hundred per year. The company did no advertising in the trade press after 1915, however, and news about it seems to disappear altogether, so it becomes extremely difficult to trace through this later period. Little Wonder catalogs are next to impossible to find. Only three are known to this writer, all of them undated, though their dates can be estimated by the record numbers they contain. The first is a four page flyer which includes issues up to no. 162 (with some gaps), dating from about May 1915. The second is an eight panel flyer containing numbers up to 679, from late 1917. The third and most elaborate is a 15 page catalog which goes up to no. 732, from early 1918.²³ At the bottom of the last page of the 1918 catalog, in tiny print, appears the legend "Little Wonder Record Co., Bridgeport, Conn. Sales office: 2036 Woolworth Building, New York." These were the locations of the Columbia plant and offices.

It seems possible that Columbia may have taken over the entire Little Wonder operation at some point during 1916 or 1917. A newspaper report about Columbia in December 1919 stated that by then "the Little Wonder record department (was) managed by Miss Helen A. McKillop."²⁴

Whoever was minding the store, it is likely that Little Wonder survived into the 1920's mainly because of its distribution agreements with Sears and other mass retailers. Sales must have dropped off rather sharply after 1918, however, as numbers above 500 or 600 are comparatively hard to find. This decline in sales was prob-

"LITTLE WONDER RECORDS"
 will play
 on ANY Talking Machine!

10¢

Get the two latest
 New York Hits

**"My Bird of
 Paradise"**

and

**"When John
 McCormack Sings
 a Song"**

Here is the latest list of 24 selections!

- | | |
|--|---|
| 166. "My Bird of Paradise," Solo. | 34. "Some Baby," Onestep. Band. |
| 165. "Dancing 'Neath the Irish Moon." | 87. "Rufus Johnson's Harmony Band." |
| 168. "The Rosary," By Nevin. | 99. "Little Grey Home in the West," Solo. |
| 108. "Where the River Shannon Flows." | 127. "Beverly Hunt," Foxtrot. |
| 164. "He Owes Me Ninety-Seven Dollars." | 149. "Pigeon Walk." |
| 167. "When John McCormack Sings a Song." | 153. "Medley Popular Airs No. 4." |
| 157. "Foxy Grandpa," (Banjo Orchestra). | 159. "I'm On My Way to Dublin Bay." |
| 152. "Steeplechase," Foxtrot. | 160. "We'll Have a Jubilee in My Old Ken-
tucky Home." |
| 38. "Horsetrot," American Dance. Band. | 161. "When I Dream of Old Erin." |
| 139. "Moonlight on the Rhine." | 162. "Don't Take My Darling Boy Away." |
| 110. "Old Folks At Home." | 109. "My Wild Irish Rose." |
| 129. "Rockaway Hunt," Foxtrot. | 98. "Chinatown, My Chinatown," Solo. |

Millions of these Little Wonder records have been sold.

DEALERS! Write at once for full particulars.
 SEND FOR BEAUTIFUL DISPLAY POSTERS.

HENRY WATERSON

Strand Building, Broadway & 47th Street, New York

LITTLE WONDER



RECORDS

Ten selections for \$1.00

The Charles William Stores

NEW YORK CITY

LITTLE WONDER RECORD CO., BRIDGEPORT, CONN.
SALES OFFICE: 2036 WOOLWORTH BLDG., NEW YORK

15 PHONOGRAPH RECORDS \$1



50 for \$3.25; 100 for \$6.00 (No two alike)

Sent prepaid anywhere in the United States. Fine selection of song, dance and instrumental music—clear as a bell. Order today, enclosing Money Order, Check or Currency.

INDEPENDENT DRUG CO., Dept. E40
5122 Indiana Avenue, CHICAGO, ILL.

TOP: Back cover of 1918 catalogue

ABOVE: Popular Mechanics for May 1919, indicating that Little Wonders could be had for as little as 6¢ each.

RIGHT: Argosy-Allstory Weekly, February 16, 1924. Record in front is no. 308, "Simple Melody."



12 Phonograph Records and Our Monthly Magazine For 1 Year \$1



Just think, we'll send you 12 phonograph records—all different—any kind you want to select. Send 25¢ for year's subscription to our magazine and 75¢ extra or \$1 in all. We want to reduce our stock of records and this offer is surely a wonderful bargain and a great opportunity for you to get 12 records at almost the price of one or two and a monthly magazine for a year—play any disc machine.

JUST LET US KNOW the kind you prefer: Dance Records, Sentimental Songs, Orchestra, Band Pieces, Comic Songs, Operatic Airs, etc., and we will send you a selection according

to your tastes. Remember, we will send 12 all different and our magazine one year—all for \$1.00—Just to introduce **EVERYDAY LIFE**, 337 W. Madison St., P. R. 107, Chicago

ably due to increased competition from independent companies, who flooded the lateral market after World War I, as the Victor and Columbia patents fell. Little Wonder's first major competition, in 1916, was from Emerson, which brought out its own 10¢ record (billed as 6-inch, but actually 5-7/8") as well as a larger 7" double-sided disc for 25¢. Sears continued to list Little Wonder until the Fall 1921 catalog, by which time no. 1443 had been reached (though not all numbers were used). I have three numbers in the 1500's, and another collector has reported one as high as 1754--"Barney Google" by an orchestra (a 1923 song). Does anyone know of a higher numbered Little Wonder?

Presumably Little Wonder folded at about this time, although there are no reports of its demise in the trade press. Frank Dorian, a high Columbia official, once said that Little Wonder was dropped "along with a number of other unprofitable items during a period of financial stringency,"²⁵ which probably refers to Columbia's bankruptcy in 1923.

Columbia continued to press 5½" records for other purposes, including personal records, and for the famous Harper-Columbia "Bubble Books" for children. One of these Bubble Book records, in fact, has the matrix number W1792, which could indicate a continuation of the Little Wonder numbering system (the "W" indicates electrical recording, which places it in 1925 or later.)²⁶

In 1924, in what was apparently a move to dump remainders, Little Wonders were being offered as premiums with a subscription to Everyday Life magazine; twelve records plus a year's subscription for \$1.00!²⁷ As for Henry Waterson, he went on to even greater things as the founder of Cameo records in 1922.

Repertoire

At first glance a Little Wonder looks like a children's record, but the repertoire belies that impression. The songs are current popular hits, standard selections, bands and later some jazz (such as the Sweatman sides). There is even a little opera. The 1918 catalog lists several operatic sides, most of them numbered in a single group. These are *Vesti la giubba* from Pagliacci (311), *E lucevan le stelle* from Tosca (312), *The Drinking Song* from Cavalleria Rusticana (313), *Dei miei bollenti spiriti* from La Traviata (314), *Questa o quella* from Rigoletto (315), *La donna e mobile* from Rigoletto (316) and *Evening Star* from Tannhäuser (649). The performers are not identified.

As a matter of fact, artist credit is almost never given on Little Wonder, the labels reading "tenor," "baritone," "band," etc. Four exceptions are known to this writer: no. 329, whose label clearly reads "Prince's Band," no. 264 ("Sterling Trio") and nos. 513 and 515 ("Metropolitan Trio"). This last-named group is not the Metropolitan Mixed Trio found on Columbia (a vocal ensemble), but rather an instrumental trio--possibly a cover name for several Columbia instrumental trios. On this rare occasion when Little Wonder did use a name, it certainly picked a confusing one!

There has been a good deal of speculation about the artists used by Little Wonder, and how often they are the same as the artists on the equivalent title Columbias. The facts are as follows. At the very outset the same artists were generally used, although there were exceptions. As early as Little Wonder no. 17 we find the Little Wonder by Arthur Collins and the equivalent Columbia (A-1513) by Ned La Rose and the Peerless Quartette. (The title is "Follow the Crowd.") After only a month or two the situation changed. Beyond no. 50 or so the same

artists were seldom used for the same title (at least on vocals; bands are hard to identify). Little Wonders are usually by bands, male solos or male duets, so selections using quartettes or female artists on Columbia almost invariably were done by someone else. There are, in fact, only a handful of female vocals in the entire Little Wonder catalog. Henry Burr, Campbell and Burr, Collins and Harlan and Sam Ash were mainstays of the 10¢ records. (Billy Murray was rarely used, because he was exclusive to Victor for lateral recording throughout most of the years Little Wonder was in existence.)

Celebrity artists are seldom found on Little Wonder, although there are exceptions. The most famous Little Wonder among today's collectors is a 1914 selection, "Back to the Carolina You Love," on no. 20. The unidentified baritone is Al Jolson, who recorded the same title for Columbia on September 19, 1914, for release on Columbia A-1621. It is not believed that Jolson made any other Little Wonders. Several Yiddish comedy selections numbered in the 360's are by a female vocalist who may be Rhoda Bernard. Later, Frank Crumit, like Jolson an exclusive Columbia artist, showed up on such Little Wonders as "Margie" (1415) and "Mary and John" (1476). There are also the previously mentioned Sweatman sides.

Physical Appearance

One thing that is uniform about Little Wonders is their appearance. They are all, as far as is known, 5½" in diameter and single-sided. Three "label" styles exist. The first does not have a paper label, but instead has the words "Little Wonder Record" embossed in the surface (which is very hard to read); this has been seen numbered as high as 416, or early 1917. The second style is a plain paper label with the words "Little Wonder" arched around the top, similar to the embossed layout, plus a group of instruments pictured around the center hole. This exists in two variations, with buff and orange backgrounds, and has been seen numbered as high as 777 (ca. 1918). The final label style, which was used from about 1919-1923, has an orange background and a drawing of a child leading an unseen band. This is the one least frequently found, and is the only Little Wonder with company identification on the label. In microscopic type, around the bottom edge, appears the legend "Little Wonder Record Co., 2036 Woolworth Building, New York, N. Y."

Earlier numbers were sometimes repressed with later styles. I have one disc with the buff style paper label pasted over an earlier embossed label--the embossed lettering still shows through.

Matrix numbers for Little Wonders are usually scratched in the wax outside the label area, and are the same as the catalog numbers (which may explain why some numbers weren't issued). Little Wonder was a cheap operation, as can be seen from the fact that the issues take was almost always one. Occasionally there's a take "2", and I have one as high as take "5", but Little Wonder didn't generally waste time getting a perfect performance. The other numbers seen in the wax identify stampers, etc.

A number of collectors have begun numerical lists of Little Wonder, and periodic appeals for information have appeared, but to my knowledge no discography of the label has ever been published. If there is sufficient interest, perhaps this is the time to do it. Such a list would be incomplete, especially in the higher numbers (remembering that many numbers were probably never issued), but at least a start could be made. What do you say, Martin?

** N O T E S **

1. Victor's standard price for black label records was 75¢; Columbia charged 65¢ for some, 75¢ for others.
2. See The New Amberola Graphic #12, p. 4, for more on these labels.
3. The vertical cut disc field, dominated by Edison, did have several minor labels, but this was obviously not the growth sector of the industry.
4. Variety, Feb. 20m 1915, p. 5.
5. ibid., Mar. 3, 1916, p. 8.
6. see Talking Machine World, Oct. 15, 1914, p. 35; Music Trade Review, Oct. 17, 1914, p. 53.
7. Variety, Mar. 3, 1916, p. 8, stated that "Mr. Waterson is also the sole owner of the Little Wonder record."
8. Trade mark #103,718, U.S. Patent Office. Application filed Dec. 5, 1914, and granted Apr. 13, 1915.
9. It is perhaps indicative of the cozy relationship between the big record companies and the trade press--in which Victor and Columbia placed heavy advertising--that no report dared mention or even speculate on the Little Wonder-Columbia connection, obvious though it was.
10. There are also indications in the Columbia files and elsewhere that Columbia was equipped to press 5½" records in large quantities. An item in The Magazine of Wall Street, New York, undated but ca. early 1915, stated that Columbia was by then "equipped to turn out daily 1000 talking machines, 65,000 ten and twelve inch records, 100,000 five and a half inch records, and 75 dictaphones." These figures referred to capacity of course, not necessarily actual production, but Columbia must have felt the need for considerable capacity to handle Waterson's fast-selling little records. (Ref. cited in letter to author from Martin Bryan, Jun. 27, 1976).
11. Record Research no. 2, p. 5.
12. Sears, Roebuck catalog, Spring 1915, and later editions.
13. Variety, Feb. 20, 1915, p. 5.
14. News story from unidentified source, dated Jul. 26, 1916; reprinted in Record Research no. 10, p. 3. The twenty million figure was alleged by a complainant in a suit against Waterson (described later in this article), and so could be overstated.
15. Talking Machine World, Mar. 15, 1915, p. 43.
16. ibid., Feb. 15, 1915, p. 48.
17. ibid., Jun. 15, 1915, p. 49.
18. Music Trade Review, Nov. 27, 1915, p. 76.
19. The "Little Wonder" \$10 machine was mentioned in Talking Machine World, Feb. 15, 1915, p. 25. A little later in the same year, an even cheaper \$2.95 machine called the "Baby" was advertised as able to play "three full Little Wonder records with one winding." It is not clear if this machine was also made by Waterson.
20. Reprinted in "The Emerson Diary" by Bob Colton and Len Kunstadt, Record Research no. 10, p. 3.
21. Talking Machine World, Oct. 15, 1917, p. 126.
22. ibid., Jun. 15, 1918, p. 32.
23. Portions of the 1918 catalog were reprinted in Record Research no. 87. An original copy is in the collection of this author.
24. Talking Machine World, Dec. 15, 1919.
25. Quoted in letter to author from Jim Walsh, Oct. 9, 1978.
26. George Blacker provides the following data on this disc: catalog no. 6-BB, matrix W1792-1, "Lullaby" by Henry Burr and orchestra (aural ID). This author has also seen file cards at Columbia for personal-series 5½" pressings.
27. Argosy Allstory Weekly, Feb. 16, 1924, advertisement, cited in New Amberola Graphic no. 4, p. 10.

(cont. from p. 13)

peat her Russian pieces, one harmonized and all translated by herself."

De Treville was forty at that time. The exact year of her retirement is unknown to me; I only know that she settled in New York, presumably to teach (few singers had so much to impart to pupils), and died there in 1954 at the age of 73.

De Treville's recording activity seems to have been limited to Edison Diamond Discs, dating from 1915. Disappointingly enough, Girard & Barnes list only three: the Bell Song from Lakmé (82334), Dell'Aqua's "Chanson Provençale" (80296), and the Laughing Song from Auber's Manon Lescaut, which is identified only by its Blue Amberol cylinder number, 28248. However, another De Treville item appeared recently on an auction list: the Mad Scene from Lucia, which probably went for an astronomic figure---at least \$100 in excess of my modest bid.

I am fortunate enough to have her two numbered Edison discs in my Historic Record Archive at the University of New Hampshire library. But what a pity that so important an artist should be so poorly represented in the one med-

ium that could have preserved her many-faceted talent for the benefit of future listeners!

Harvey Hindermeyer, for years Edison's chief recording assistant, once told me that when Edison was dissatisfied with a Diamond Disc, he would hurl it violently against the wall of the studio (often over the protests of everyone else concerned) and shatter it to bits lest it be released by accident. Could De Treville have been a frequent victim of this ritual?

* * * *

Your comments should be addressed to: Robert B. Stone, 33 Beech Street, Newmarket, NH 03857.

* * * *

Editor's note: In his recent book, Edison Disc Recordings, Ray Wile indicates that there were five discs by De Treville prepared for Tone Test work only, including the Mad Scene cited in Mr. Stone's article. De Treville was evidently engaged for Tone Tests in late 1917.

In Appreciation of Joseph C. Smith

by David L. Jones

One of the most prolific yet neglected dance orchestras before 1920 is Joseph C. Smith's. The very name is almost a joke among veteran collectors, yet the truth is Joseph C. Smith was the first U.S. band leader to become popular through the medium of a phonograph record using his own personnel and not some studio "house" musicians. Although many people think he was a "house" band, he was not.

According to the March 1918 Columbia record supplement, "For fifteen years, Mr. Smith has been an important factor in Metropolitan dancing circles." True, there were dance records by other ensembles, released earlier - Europe's Society Orchestra and McKee's Orchestra on Victor and Joan Sawyer's Persian Garden Orchestra on Columbia, but they lacked any real polish or musicianship. Also, there were big orchestras who had yet to record who were enjoying large local followings - Earl Fuller in New York City and Art Hickman in San Francisco. Prior to 1916 there seems to have been no rush to the recording studios by these established bands. One can only wonder why Victor chose to release a record by Joseph C. Smith's Orchestra in December, 1916. My guess is the company thought some "fresh air" was needed. A look at the Victor record supplements of the period confirms it. Military bands' appeal was wearing thin. It's awfully hard to feel comfortable waltzing to a full scale military band and hardly any more romantic. The Victor people were looking for new "blood" in 1916.

Since the companies were situated in New York they had no farther to go than the big hotels of the day. Joseph C. Smith played at the Plaza Hotel and enjoyed a considerable local following, so he probably got the invitation in that manner via a Victor representative.

Smith's first Victor session was September 25, 1916 and in the December, 1916 Victor supplement, "Songs of the Night" - Waltz appeared as his first release backed by the Victor Dance Orchestra on the B side.

I know little of Smith the man. In the November 1918 Victor supplement there is an excellent photo of him and his orchestra, which leads to what many have always wondered: what was the instrumentation? The November 1918 photo shows Smith - violin (standing), another violin or viola, a 'cello, a trombone, cornet, string bass, piano and drummer.

For recording purposes, the string bass was replaced with a bass clarinet played by Maurice Bonavente. Hugo Frey was the pianist and from May 1918 to November 1919, Harry Raderman was trombonist. On the very early 1916-17 sides, two cornets were used and on the later sides a saxophone seems to be used for effects, usually played by Max Flaster. After 1921 the sax was used more prominently. The drummer was Teddy Brown who also worked for Earl Fuller. Even Rudy Wiedoeft played sax on a few sides in 1920.

With the release of "Songs of the Night" an unmistakable and quite distinctive sound was born, almost European or Slavic in character. The waltzes have an almost "Hungarian" quality about them while the peppier dance numbers seem to have a dash of British music hall flavor. Even a Victor supplement blurb states "Joseph C. Smith and His Orchestra manage to produce a tone quality peculiar to itself." (Dec. 1917) The only deviation from the usually no-gimmick, close ensemble style of Smith was the "Money Blues" released in April 1917. This record features excellent if not revolutionary drum work. It's one of the best records of that period, by anyone. The re-

verse is even more interesting. "I've a Shooting Box in Scotland" is surely Cole Porter's first commercial song publication.

Smith himself wrote several dance numbers, these being "St. Elmo," a one-step in 1917, and in 1919 "Lovely Summertime," a waltz, "Who Did It?", another one-step and "Coo Coo," a fox trot. "Coo Coo" seems to have been the most successful as I've seen it on Pathé and Emerson. "St. Elmo" was co-authored with Nicholas Briglia and he may have been an orchestra member, as well could have James A. N. Caruso who wrote "This Way Out." It is played and sounds much like "St. Elmo" and was recorded at the same session.

One Smith alumnus needs no such guessing. Hugo Frey wrote many of the selections Smith recorded - especially before 1920. A few of the more popular ones are "Havanola," "Money Blues," "Dodola," "My Dough Boy," "Calicoco" and "Rockin' the Boat." Several of these titles, too, appeared on other labels by other artists.

Evidently the Smith orchestra had signed a one year agreement with Victor, fulfilled it and left at the end of October 1917. During the first year, of the 32 sides made, only one was not released. Then - there was that fiasco at Columbia.

Smith went over to Columbia in November 1917 and recorded two Hugo Frey selections - "Calicoco" and "When You Come Back." These records are real disasters. Gone was the unmistakable and distinctive string sound. So bad, these records should be labeled by Joseph C. Smith's Marching Band.

Victor, Smith and the public were quick to realize it, because after March 1918 Columbia releases, Smith was back at Victor! What really caused the public demand for Smith to come back to Victor was the February 1918 release of the "Missouri Waltz." Recorded at the last session in October 1917, Victor released it as a fill-in and it took off like gangbusters. In fact during Smith's absence, Victor had recorded and released fine records by Harold Vee, Waldorf-Astoria, Sgt. Markel and Earl Fuller's (big string ensemble, not the Rector Novelty of Columbia) Orchestras, but Smith was the one who really caught the public's fancy. However the best was yet to come.

Upon the May 1918 return, the band recorded its biggest item and a very historical one too. "Smiles" featured two pianos and a vocal chorus sung by Harry Macdonough. Victor made comment of it in the August 1918 supplement and along with the "Missouri Waltz," they made up two of the three Best Seller dance records Victor offered in a special December 1918 bulletin. Of "Smiles" it said "Smiles is a record that has provoked many frowns, because we haven't been able to produce enough copies."

With the First World War over and the world safe for democracy Joseph C. Smith's Orchestra made another important contribution. The first record to sell around a million copies. This was the "Yellow Dog Blues" written by W. C. Handy. What sold the record was Harry Raderman's "laughing trombone" and Joseph C. Smith doing the "ha-ha-ha." Ha-ha-ha is just what everyone concerned with it did - all the way to the bank! Especially W. C. Handy. The royalties from this record helped him establish Black Swan records.

1919 was certainly the biggest year as far as output went with 50 or so sides made and this was also the highwater mark. Like the military band predecessors, complacency had set in and Smith wasn't changing with the

10-inch Victors - In the order in which they were recorded

1916

18165 Money Blues - Fox Trot

1917

18165 I've a Shooting Box in Scotland - One-step
 18246 Poor Butterfly/Allah's Holiday - Fox Trots
 18247 Evensong Waltz/Get Off My Foot - Fox Trot
 18275 You're in Love - Med. Fox Trot/This Way Out - One-step
 18313 Oh, Johnny! Oh, Johnny, Oh! - Med. One-step/Dance and Grow Thin - F.T.
 18334 Hitchy-Koo - Med. One-step/Ziegfeld Follies of 1917 - Medley One-step
 18390 That's It - Fox Trot/Umbrellas to Mend - One-step
 18407 My Sweetie - One-step/Some Sunday Morning - Medley Fox Trot

1918

18478 Calicoco - Fox Trot/My Dough Buy - One-step
 18473 Smiles - Fox Trot, Harry Macdonough-voc./Rose Room - Medley Fox Trot
 18500 Mary - Fox Trot, Harry Macdonough, Charles Harrison & Lewis James-voc.
 /Rock-A-Bye Baby - Medley Fox Trot
 18507 Hindustan - Fox Trot
 18511 Me-Ow! - One-step, vocal effects by orchestra
 18507 'N' Everything - Medley Fox Trot
 18521 Girl Behind the Gun - Medley Fox Trot/Rockin' the Boat - Fox Trot
 18541 Canary - Medley Fox Trot

1919

18532 Mickey - Henry Burr-voc. (Joseph C. Smith Trio)
 18531 Mammy's Lullaby - Waltz, Elsie Baker-voc.
 18533 (Dry Your) Tears - Medley Fox Trot
 18531 Sweet Hawaiian Moonlight - Medley Waltz
 18533 Come On Papa - Medley One-step
 18532 Kisses - Henry Burr-voc. (Joseph C. Smith Trio)
 18541 Royal Vagabond - Medley Fox Trot
 18543 When You Look in the Heart of a Rose/Dear Old Pal of Mine - Waltzes
 18561 Rainy Day Blues - vocal effects "Rainy Blues" repeated several times/
 Out of the East - Fox Trots
 18603 Yearning - Medley Fox Trot
 18594 Tell Me - Fox Trot, Arthur Fields-voc.
 18601 Coo-Coo - Fox Trot
 18594 The Vamp - Fox Trot, Billy Murray & Harry Macdonough-voc.
 18601 Who Did It? - One-step

18615 Waiting - Medley Fox Trot/Mammy O' Mine - Medley One-step
 18618 Tulip Time - Medley Fox Trot
 18632 Peggy - Medley Fox Trot, Harry Macdonough-voc.
 18618 The Yellow Dog Blues - Medley Fox Trot, Jos. C. Smith-laughing
 18715 Happy - One-step (released 1921)

18681 Lovely Summertime - Waltz (released 1920)
 18629 I Might Be Your "Once-In-A-While" - Medley Fox Trot
 18640 Taxi - One-step, with vocal effects
 18629 Patches - Fox Trot

18630 Nobody Knows - Medley One-step
 18632 On Miami Shore - Waltz
 18630 Oh! What a Pal Was Mary - Medley Waltz
 18646 Apple Blossoms - Medley One-step
 18650 That Naughty Waltz
 18646 Carolina Sunshine - Waltz

1920

18661 Whose Baby Are You? - Medley Fox Trot
 18662 Karavan - Fox Trot, Rudy Wiedoeft-oboe/alto sax
 18661 Left All Alone Again Blues - Medley F.T. " "
 18673 Oriental Stars - One-step/Alexandria - Fox Trot
 18715 If You Could Care - Medley Waltz
 18678 Love Nest - Medley Fox Trot/A Young Man's Fancy - Medley Fox Trot
 18700 Alice Blue Gown/Tripoli - Medley - Waltzes
 18719 Honeydew - Medley Waltz/Honeydew - Medley One-step
 18733 Tip-Top - Medley One-step

1921

18761 Mello 'Cello - Waltz
 18739 Kiss-A-Miss/Romance - Waltzes
 18745 I Lost My Heart to You/Broken Moon - Medley Fox Trots
 18761 Legend - Medley Waltz
 18816 Why Dear?/Sal-O-May - Fox Trots
 18827 Blossom Time - Medley Waltz/It's You - Fox Trot
 18845 Stealing/I Want My Mammy - Medley - Fox Trots

1922

18866 Three O'Clock in the Morning - Waltz/Lo-La-Lo - Fox Trot
 18878 While Miami Dreams - Fox Trot
 18885 Every Day - Medley Fox Trot/Rose of Stamboul - Medley Waltz
 12-inch Victor - In the order in which they were recorded

1916

35593 Songs of the Night - Waltz

1917

35615 Havanola - F.T./Waltz from Drigo's Serenade
 35630 Oh, Boy! - Medley Fox Trot/St. Elmo - One-step
 35640 Fascination - Waltz/For Me and My Gal - Medley Fox Trot
 35648 Mondaine - Valse Berceuse/For You a Rose - Medley Fox Trot
 35660 Rambler Rose - Medley One-step/Leave It to Jane - Medley Fox Trot
 35663 Missouri Waltz/Kiss Me Again - Waltz

1918

35682 I'm Always Chasing Rainbows - Medley Fox Trot
 35676 Dodola - Waltz/Oriental - Fox Trot
 35682 Head Over Heels - Medley Fox Trot

1919

35684 Sometime - Medley Fox Trot/Chong - Medley Fox Trot, Billy Murray-voc.
 35690 Oh, My Dear! - Medley Fox Trot/Somebody's Sweetheart - Medley One-step

1920

35695 Ching-A-Ling's Jazz Bazaar - Med. F.T., Billy Murray-voc./Irene - Med.F.T.
 35698 Cuban Moon - F.T./Fiegfeld Follies of 1920 - Med.F.T., Wiedoeft-alto sax

1921

35706 Lady Billy/Sally - Medley Fox Trots

times. The violin still prominently dominating things and there were no signs of change. Joseph C. Smith sounded the same in 1920 as he did in 1916.

In November 1920 Paul Whiteman and the Benson Orchestra of Chicago "happened" and the handwriting was on the wall. The day of the full-bodied string orchestra was done. Even orchestras like Orlando's, Markel's, Fuller's, Jos. Knecht's and Harold Veo's realized the inevitable and changed their formats. Knecht lasted to at least 1926 and Veo through 1929.

Early in 1921 Smith's Orchestra added a tenor sax and alto/soprano saxes, but the Victor people must have felt this band was by now an embarrassment because only 18 releases would come between January 1921 and March of 1922.

In September 1922 Joseph C. Smith moved to Brunswick and made some lovely records but these too are no improvement although nicely recorded. Obviously sales were poor as I only possess two of the 18 sides issued up to mid-1923. What a pity Smith didn't go over to Brunswick in 1919 just when they commenced U.S. recording.

The last sides made by the band were in March-June 1924 and January 1925 on the Canadian HMV label. These I've never heard. Also in 1925 Joseph C. Smith left to tour England. The only thing left by Jos. C. in England that lasted was Teddy Brown the drummer. He became very popular on the radio there.

I personally think had Joseph Smith taken his orchestra on tour in the U.S. during and after the First World War and then gone to Europe, he may have lasted in popularity much longer and may have seen just what the public really wanted. But after listening to the last records I doubt it. I have two regrets, that he did not record for a vertical cut record company such as Aeolian-Vocalion, Paramount, Okeh or especially Edison and that he did not make it to the electrical era, which he just missed.

Joseph C. Smith lived to be very elderly and, according to Brian Rust, died in either St. Petersburg or Jacksonville, Florida in 1969 or 1970 in destitute cir-

cumstances. What a shame for a man of such ability to have gone that route. I only wish I could have known him. Thank you Joseph C. Smith - whoever you were.



35698 (Ziegfeld Follies of 1920—Medley Fox Trot Joseph C. Smith's Orchestra
12 in. list (Introducing "Bells" and "Tell Me, Little Gypsy")
price 1.35 Cuban Moon—Fox Trot Joseph C. Smith's Orchestra

Two splendid fox trots, as unlike as salt and sugar so far as musical content goes, but as like as two peas when it comes to smooth perfection of result. "Bells" is appropriately named; there are the little sleigh bells of which Poe sang in exquisite and undying words, and there are the great bells of conflagration which he celebrated in words of such sublime and terrible power. Beneath them, jingling or clangorous, as may be, there is heard the smooth flow of the fox trot, the stringed instruments gliding through with easy and graceful effect. "Bells" is by Irving Berlin. It was one of the big hits of the Ziegfeld Follies of 1920, from which is taken also "Tell Me, Little Gypsy," by the same composer. "Cuban Moon" begins in

the stringed instruments, in a beautiful yearning strain which might well express love in the Tropics under the great white moon, to the distant plashing of the surf and the faint smell of orange blossoms. It is a most unusual fox trot, with original rhythmic effects which do not disturb, but rather help, the movement of the dance. Out of its "even tenor" at times leaps forth a curious phrase—like a blue flame in darkness. Toward the end the drums and percussion instruments enter with fine and spirited effect. "Cuban Moon" is by Norman Spencer and Joe Kierman. These are two remarkably fine dance numbers, capable of yielding many a happy hour. Dance or not, you will enjoy them.

16

The following were recorded by Joseph C. Smith for Victor but not released.

Admiration - Waltz (1916) Nobody Ever - Fox Trot (1919)
Topaz - Waltz (1917) Mother's Red, Red Rose (1919)
Djer Kiss - Waltz (1918) Love's Wonderful (1919)
Mother's Garden - Waltz (1918) My Laddie - Fox Trot (1919)
Texas - Fox Trot (1918) Sonia - Waltz (1920)
You're the One (That I Want) (1919) Lassie - Waltz (1920)
Mary Ann - One-step (1919) Lips - Waltz, Hart and Shaw-voc. (1920)
Lullaby Blues - Medley Waltz (1919) Lips - Waltz, no vocal (1920)
I've Got My Captain Working for Me Now (1919) Doo Dah Blues - Fox Trot (1922)

Columbia

Nov. 20, 1917

A-2460 Calicoco - Fox Trot/When You Come Back - One-step

Brunswick

1922

2328 Where Is the Man of My Dreams/Just As Long As You Have Me - Med. F.T.'s
20007 Lovely Lucerne/Isle of Sweethearts - Medley - Waltzes (12")
2352 When Hearts Are Young/I Still Can Dream - Medley Fox Trots
20009 Medley of Irish Waltzes - Parts 1 and 2 (12")

1923

2393 Un Tango Dans La Nuit/De Cinq A Sept - Tangos (Joseph C. Smith Trio)
2402 Love and the Moon/Wonderful You - Medley Fox Trots
2424 Argentine/Once Upon a Time - Medley Fox Trots
2440 The Sweetheart of Sigma Chi/Marianna - Waltzes
2447 Now That I Need You, You're Gone/Stella - Fox Trots
2457 Alma De Bohemio/Seduction - Tangos

Canadian "HMV" Victors

1924

216463 Chili Bom-Bom/Today (I Love You Today) - Fox Trots
216464 Paradise Alley/It Ain't Gonna Rain No Mo' - Fox Trots
216465 Driftwood - Fox Trot/It's a Man Every Time, It's a Man - Waltz
216466 On a Blue Lagoon - Fox Trot, Ruby Green-voc./Tessie, Stop Teasin' Me
Fox Trot, Al Johnson-voc.

216472 Sweet Little You/Nashville Nightingale - Fox Trots

1925

216492 Hello, 'Tucky/I Love You Best of All - Fox Trots

David L. Jones
116 Constitution Circle
Clairton, Pa. 15025

national music lovers: part eleven

by DAVE COTTER

We will continue to ask all of you to check those NMLs in your collection. There are four records not accounted for to date (1076, 1083, 1088 and 1092). Also, there are still many sides previously listed that have incomplete data,,,mainly missing master numbers (1023, 1047, 1051 or 1059, 1054, 1056, 1073, 1074, 1075, 1077, 1078, 1079, 1080, 1081, 1086 and 1087). Any help you can give will be appreciated.

Tim Brooks noted that we completely skipped the listing for NML 1055...(sorry 'bout that).

David Harris (5196-3)(1235-B)

JUST A GIRL THAT MEN FORGET

Thomas Edwards (5246-1)

EVERY NIGHT I CRY MYSELF TO SLEEP

(5196) from Banner 1235 by Vernon Dalhart. This side is a duplication of NML 1044-B.

(5246) from Banner 1259 by Arthur Fields. This side is a duplication of NML 1046-B.

* * * * *

DANOE SERIES

(Label Design: red shield on gold background)
(1089 through 1096)

1089 Music Lovers Dance Orchestra (5499-2)

WHAT'LL I DO

William Morris (5512-1)

SHINE

1090 Master Melody Makers (5461-)

THERE'S YES! YES! IN YOUR EYES

Manhattan Musicians (5476-)

LIMEHOUSE BLUES

1091 Harry Harris (comedy solo, with uke)(4900-5)

IT AIN'T GONNA RAIN NO MORE

Samuel Spencer (baritone, with uke)(1302)

WHERE THE LAZY DAISIES GROW

1092

1093 Master Melody Makers (5472-1)

FROM ONE TILL TWO

David Harris and Thos. Edwards (5524-1)

LAND OF SUNSET DREAMS

1094 Jos. Elliott (5525-2)

JEALOUS

Music Lovers Dance Orchestra (5529-1)

MEMORY LANE

1095 Manhattan Musicians (5530-2)

PLEASE

Master Melody Makers (5496-1)

HOME IN PASADENA

1096 N.M.L. Dance Orchestra (5398-2)

WHY DID I KISS THAT GIRL

David Harris (comedy solo, ukulele acc.)(5479-2)

MY PAPA DOESN'T TWO TIME NO TIME

--- MATRIX NOTES ---

1089 (5499) from Banner 1359 by Lucky Strike Dance Orchestra (Glantz)

1089 (5512) Plaza master. Most likely is Billy Jones

1090 (5461) from Banner 1332 by Sam Lanin's Orchestra

1090 (5476) from Banner 1351 by Sam Lanin's Orchestra

1091 (4900) from Regal 9634 by Bob White (Vernon Dalhart)

Ukulele acc. by May Singhi Breen

1091 (1302) from Banner 1328 by Cliff Edwards

1093 (5472) from Banner 1343 by Lucky Strike Dance Orchestra (Glantz)

1093 (5524) from Banner 1378 by Robert Craig and George Bronson

1094 (5525) from Banner 1368 by George Bronson

1094 (5529) from Banner 1377 by Imperial Dance Orchestra (Samuels)

1095 (5530) from Banner 1376 by Lucky Strike Dance Orchestra (Samuels)

1095 (5496) from Banner 1350 by Roseland Dance Orchestra (Lanin)

1096 (5398) from Banner 1306 by Six Black Diamonds (Samuels), vocal by Arthur Hall

1096 (5479) from Banner 1356 by Ernest Hart...anyone know who was playing uke on this???

NML really starts to get interesting at this point. Jazz buffs will note the three sides by Sam Lanin's group... young Red Nichols was part of the organization at this time and can be heard on all three sides. Stay tuned for part twelve of this continuing series (more dance listings; complete details needed for 1098). Send any comments, corrections, additions and any listings for NML and New Phonic to...Dave Cotter, 225 Brookside Ave., Santa Cruz, Calif. 95060.

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Neglected Edison Diamond Disc Artists

II. Yvonne De Treville

by Robert B. Stone

Some years ago I was fortunate enough to acquire, in mint condition, at the bargain basement price of 50¢ (marked down from 75¢), a slim volume which proclaimed on the front cover: "'500 TIMES' - Opera in English, by the Castle Square Opera Company, at the American Theatre, New York City, Monday, October 16, 1899." It contained the following:

Casts of all operas produced by Henry Savage from December 27, 1897, to October 16, 1899;

Plot synopses of the operas, 56 in all; and

37 photographs of officials and prominent artists of the company.

While ignorant of the actual artistic merits of the average Henry Savage production, I must congratulate him on his enterprise. The greater part of the standard opera repertory was represented, ranging from such "spectaculars" as Die Meistersinger, Lohengrin, Aida and La Gioconda to operettas by Offenbach, Johann Strauss and, naturally, Gilbert and Sullivan.

The name of Henry W. Savage was one to conjure with, both in opera and spoken drama. In regard to the latter, a hint that he may at times have sailed rather close to the wind in his dealings with playwrights is found in the musical comedy memoirs of P. G. Wodehouse and Guy Bolton, Bring on the Girls, in a photograph of Savage over the caption: "He walked with a slight limp, having probably in the course of his career been shot in the foot by some indignant author."

As for the 1897-99 personnel, several familiar names emerge: sopranos Grace Golden, Selma Kronold (sister of the 'cellist Hans Kronold), and, most important of all, the subject of this article, Yvonne De Treville. Among contraltos were Marie Mattfield, who went on to a Metropolitan Opera engagement of nineteen seasons' duration; and Maude Lambert (later Mrs. Ernest R. Ball) who, some forty years after, was to become a dear and cherished friend of the present writer, while playing Sister Bessie in the No. 1 road company of Tobacco Road. I recall vividly one of her reminiscences of her late husband: "He was a man's man---and a few women's."

The tenors included Joseph Sheehan and Barron Berthald (recorded by Columbia in 1912). A touch of irony is found in the impersonation of the profligate Duke in Rigoletto by none other than Dudley Buck, Jr.---possibly in expiation of the many dull anthems inflicted on captive church congregations by Dudley Buck, Sr.

Of the baritones, mention should be made of Homer Lind, who sang Benoit in the first English language performance of La Bohème earlier in 1897 with the Carl Rose Company in England, and Harry Luckstone, who was soon to join the Aborn Opera Company and who figures in an amusing anecdote in James M. Cain's novel Serenade. An apprentice in the baritone contingent, H. O. Seagle, was the Oscar Seagle who was to become Jean de Reszke's chief teaching assistant in Paris before returning to America in 1914 to pursue a successful career as recitalist and teacher. It seems that gentlemen of the chorus got short shrift from the typesetters responsible for the wording of the programme; on one occasion he was listed as H. C. Seigel, on another as H. O. Seagle.

The bass of the company whose name merits particular attention was Herbert Witherspoon, whose performances with Savage antedate by about a decade his debuts as a Victor recording artist (1907) and a singer of leading bass roles at the Metropolitan (1908).

Two additional names must be added: Raymond Hitchcock, well on his way to becoming the leading comedian on Broadway; and Frank Moulan, America's premier patter singer in the works of Gilbert and Sullivan. I saw him some thirty-five years later on tour in the role of Ko-Ko. I learned afterward that he was performing under the handicap of a broken back, carefully strapped up for the occasion, but there was no hint of it in his lightsome performance. I recall that, for the third encore of "The Flowers that Bloom in the Spring," he merely stepped into the footlights and conducted the orchestra in a repetition, remarking, "Lovely tune; I've always wanted to hear it."

These were some of the colleagues who performed with Our Heroine (I have gotten around to her at last), the soprano Yvonne De Treville. Despite the exotic name, she was a native of Galveston, Texas, where she was born in 1881. In Paris, she studied harp, violin and voice before deciding on an operatic career. Her first engagement was with Savage during the 1897-99 period. It found her already, at age 16 to 18, a radiantly beautiful prima donna who must have acquired a sound vocal method in a remarkably short time. Judging from her assignments, the ordinary distinction between coloratura, lyric and dramatic roles simply did not exist for her. Following is a list of the roles she sang, categorized in the usual way, along with her number of performances of each:

DRAMATIC: Aida (10), Leonore (in Il Trovatore) (3), La Gioconda (3).

LYRIC: Marguerite (9), Juliette (9), Elsa (4), Eve (3), Mignon (3), Lurline (in Wallace's ballad opera of that name) (3).

COLORATURA: Lucia (3), Gilda (3), Marie (in The Daughter of the Regiment) (3).

In all, 56 performances of 13 roles. However, with all this valuable experience behind her, Miss De Treville was evidently still dissatisfied with her progress or was influenced by sound advice; in 1899 she returned to Paris for three years' study with the formidable Mathilde Marchesi, whose success in turning out women singers of high calibre remains a tradition.

De Treville's next engagement was with the Stockholm Opera (1902-04); she then moved on to the famed Maryinsky Theatre of St. Petersburg for the 1904-05 season. From there she took to the operatic high road: between 1905 and 1910 she was heard in Madrid, Vienna, Cairo, Bucharest, Budapest, Nice, Brussels and Berlin. It is easy to believe Oscar Thompson's statement in his book The American Singer that "few Americans have sung so widely on the continent of Europe as Miss De Treville.... no less than nine languages played a part in her operatic career."

Her only other opera engagement in this country was a single performance of Gilda at the Boston Opera during the 1911-12 season. From 1912, she confined her activity to light opera and recitals. Of one of the latter, in 1914, Richard Aldrich wrote in the New York Times: "There was no doubt of her success in those portions of the program where delicacy, charm and refinement were the requisites. She is accomplished in all the effects and graces of artistry."

In 1921 the same critic had occasion to comment on how "Miss De Treville recalled her Brussels opera days in a Belgian group, which was encored. She also had to re-

(please turn back to page 8)

I AM LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD MEN

Have you ever told yourself, "THERE MUST BE A BETTER WAY TO COLLECT OLD RECORDS"? Have you built your collection to a few thousand records and now find hundreds of duplicates just taking space? Have you ever told yourself, "I WISH I COULD TRADE THESE DUPLICATE ITEMS FOR THINGS I DON'T HAVE"? If you have answered "YES" to these questions, this article is for you.

I am looking for a minimum of 5 collectors who would be interested in starting a PRE-1942 RECORD EXCHANGE. Now please notice the word "EXCHANGE". There are plenty of places you can go to spend your money, but this will not be one of them. This exchange is to get into big quantity trades of 50 and 100 records with the only cost being postage.

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All records must be in good condition---no cracked, chipped or unplayable records. All records must be PRE-1942. Each member of the EXCHANGE will get a master list from all other members of the EXCHANGE at the same time. That means if there are 5 members, each member will be able to look through 2500 records at a time. He will also be able to trade with any of the other EXCHANGE members on an equal basis---record for record.

If you are interested, please drop me a line. It is not necessary to get your lists ready at this time. I will reply to each letter and if we can find a minimum of 5 charter members, we will make our first exchange on July 1, 1979 and the next each three months after that.

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Wanted: Cylinders and disc records by Irene Franklin in good condition. Also, song sheets and other paper items relating to Franklin. Dolores Stender, 802 Berlin Road, Cherry Hill, N.J. 08034

17.
Wanted: Horn, reproducer and pivot for Puck-style phonograph. Arthur Koch, 5006 Barkwood Place, Rockville, Maryland 20853

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20.

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